(b) if so, what are its highlights; and

(c) in what specific areas the two countries are cooperating in this sector and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The two countries are cooperating in oil exploration in the following specific areas:—

(i) Intensive Integrated Exploration for hydrocarbons in identified areas of North Cambay and Cauvery and West Bengal basins.

(ii) Workover of idle and sick wells.

(iii) Deputation of Soviet specialists in India.

(iv) Training of Indian Personnel in USSR.

The protocol was signed as a result of the meeting of the Working Group which reviewed the progress of projects in the above areas of cooperation.

Total imports of Crude and Petroleum products

1290. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the oil experts at the oil and Natural Gas Commission headquarters fear that a huge increase in the country's import bill of crude and petroleum products will be necessary in view of the widening gap between consumption and production;

(b) if so, what is the total gap between consumption and production of the crude oil and petroleum products so far during 1988 and what are the steps being considered in this regard; and

(c) what are the total imports of crude oil and petroleum products made so far during the year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) The actual import bill of crude and petroleum products during the current financial year will be known only after the close of the year. However, as per current estimates the bill is not likely to be huge compared to the previous year.

(b) and (c) During the period January to September, 1988 a quantity of 13.4 million tonnes of crude oil and 3.9 million tonnes of petroleum products was imported to meet the deficit to the production and demand in the country.

Anticipation of Production Level of the Crude Oil

1291. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR:
SHRI BIR BHADRA PRATAP SINGH:
SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that ONGC have anticipated a production level of of about 4.5 million tonnes of crude oil from the Southern region by 1995-end;

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) what are the details of anticipated production level of crude oil by the ONGC from other regions of the country by 1995-end and what steps have been taken to achieve the targets?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) to (c) Preliminary projections of crude production from the Southern region by 1995 are of the order of 2.05 million tonnes. The firm estimates of the production from this region, as also from the other regions, will, however, be known only, after 8th Plan is finalised.

The following steps, *inter-alia*, have been taken to increase the production of crude oil:

— Intensification of exploration, which may eventually lead to enhanced production.

— Intensification of work-over operations.

— Use of enhanced oil recovery techneques.

Sick and closed industries

1292. SHRI CHITTA BASU: Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state the number of sick and closed industries as on the 31st March, 1988 alongwith the specific steps to arrest the mounting sickness?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): Data on sick industrial units assisted by Banks in the country are collected by the Reserve Bank of India and data on closures is maintained by the Ministry of Labour. As per the latest information available from Reserve Bank of India, the total number of sick units, both large and small, as at the end of June 1987 are 1,59,283. As per the latest available provisional information from Ministry of Labour, the number of units that were permanently closed was 173 during 1987 and 57, during January-August, 1988.

Government of India have taken a number of steps for the revival of sick industrial units in the country. Some of the important steps are as follows:

(i) The Government have enacted a comprehensive legislation, namely, "The Sick Industrial Companies (Special Provision) Act, 1985." A quasi-judicial body designated as 'The Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR)' has been set up under the Act to deal with the problems of sick industrial companies in an effective manner, which has become operational with effect from the 15th May, 1987.

(ii) The Reserve Bank of India have issued guidelines to the banks for strengthening the monitoring systems and for arresting industrial sickness at the incipient stage so that corrective measures are taken in time.

(iii) the banks have also been directed by the Reserve Bank of India to formulate rehabilitation packages for the revival of potentially viable units. The banks and financial institutions evolve rehabilitation packages for the revival of sick units.

(iv) Reserve Bank of India have also issued guidelines separately to the banks indicating parameters within which banks could grant reliefs and concessions for rehabilitation of potentially viable sick units without reference to RBI both in large and small scale sectors.

(v) Government of India introduced a Marginal Money Scheme with a view to supplementing the efforts of the State Governments in reducing the incidence of sickness in the small scale sector. Under the liberalised scheme the maximum amount of assistance per unit available to sick small scale units for rehabilitation has been increased from Rs. 20,000 to Rs 50,000.